**STEM FACULTY OF THE YEAR**

**Dr. Cleon Barnett**

**Assistant Professor of Physics**

With more than a decade’s worth of

experience in the field of physics,

Dr. Cleon M. Barnett knows that it

takes both persistence and self-motivation to be

successful.

As assistant professor of physics at Alabama

State University, Barnett seeks to make physics

“fun and easy to understand” for his students.

For Barnett, helping

students understand

physics and developing a

foundation for their future

career endeavors is the

best part about teaching at

ASU.

“The teachers here really

care about the students,”

Barnett said. “We take

a special interest in the

development of our

students.”

Barnett teaches College

Physics I and II, as well

as Physical Science

Survey, and currently is

researching laser-induced

breakdown spectroscopy

(LIBS), a procedure in

which a laser pulse is used

to detect the elements that

comprise matter in any

state (gas, liquid or solid).

A native of Cairo, Ill., Barnett earned his

Bachelor of Science degree in physics from

Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University

in 1993, a master’s degree in physics from Fisk

University in 1998 and a Ph.D. in physics from

Florida A&M University in 2007.

Barnett’s interest in physics peaked at Fisk

University under the tutelage of his physics

professor, Dr. Edward Thomas.

Thomas, who is now at Auburn University,

not only inspired and motivated Barnett, but

also played a big role in his decision to pursue a

career in physics.

Barnett’s work has afforded him the opportunity

to present research in Canada, Spain, France,

Egypt and all over the United States.

He also has had his

works published in *The*

*International Society of*

*Optical Engineering,*

*the Journal of Applied*

*Spectroscopy and*

*Spectrochimica Acta Part*

*B: Atomic Spectroscopy*.

Prior to coming to ASU

in 2008, Barnett worked as

a post-doctoral fellow for

the International Institute

of Forensic Science at

Florida International

University, research

assistant in the laser

remote sensing laboratory

at Florida A&M University

and as a research assistant

at Fisk in plasma science

and material science

laboratories.

When Barnett is not

teaching students or conducting research with

lasers, he can be found taking photographs,

exercising, attending church, playing video

games or spending time with his wife and

daughter.

Barnett’s dedication to his students and his

extensive research in the area of LIBS is what

makes him the 2011 recipient of the STEM

Faculty of the Year Award.

